1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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651 621 activity that exists in the village: common labour and communal ceremonies and sacrifices, fights and wars in pre-European times, and tax-collection for the modern Native Administration. Tax-collection in the village has become a little ritual of its own, interesting enough to be described here. Some time before the N.A. lorry is expected from Bida on its periodical tax-collecting visits you will find the chief sitting in his house, or in a booth in the market, surrounded by the people who have come to pay their tax. The two or three head *nūsaži* will sit with him. The 'tax Mallam', who is attached to the Village Head as scribe and 'accountant', makes entries in his little book and is busy writing out tax receipts. Little heaps of coins pile up before them. On this day the normal routine of village life is interrupted: the men do not go to their farms and often forgo their midday meal at home, and even a ceremony that might fall in that time will be postponed until the 'tax ritual' has been concluded.

621 A large proportion of co-operative village work is done to-day by the order of the N.A.: the repair of a rest-house, the clearing of a motor-road, &c. But the concerted action of the village community is still as efficient in spontaneous, unsolicited work. I have seen the men of a village repairing a bush bridge leading to their farms a day or two after the news that it had been swept away by floods was reported to the chief. [694] And although there exists to-day an efficient body of N.A. police, in an emergency it falls frequently enough to the people of a village to organize the pursuit of a criminal and to escort him to the District Head—a task which the young men at least undertake with efficiency and relish.

BALANCE OF POWER

622 623 661 To repeat: the village elders are the mouthpiece and the agents of the chief, through whom his orders reach the community; and they are also, in turn, the informants on whom the chief depends, and the mouthpiece of the people whom they represent both in their official capacity and as heads of kinship and local groups. Again we may call the chief a symbol of the collective identity of the village community, in the sense that, through his orders, he expresses its collective will and interests. Yet the degree of perfection which this political system, with its well-planned harmonious co-operation between chief and elders, attains in practice varies considerably. Autocratically inclined chiefs find means to evade the check on their power which an efficient council of elders implies. We have spoken of certain chiefs who appointed their friends and favourites to the position of titled elders in disregard of more legitimate claims, thus creating for themselves a personal following in the village council. I was told of chiefs who in the past have overridden the authority of the elders, levying tribute and refusing legitimate grants of land, until the elders appealed to the overlord of the country, the *Etsu* Nupe, against their overbearing ruler. If they failed to obtain the support of the king, my informants added, they would carry on as if there were no chief—go on strike, as it were. I have myself witnessed all variations possible in this fight for balance of power: an autocratic chief who

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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seemed to have managed perfectly to turn his elders into mere puppets; a chief (the chief of Doko) whose overbearing behaviour caused a *tunga* group to refuse him the customary 'tithe' of fish caught in a pond on their territory; and also a chief who had tried, in the appointment of a rank-holder, to go against the majority of his council, but was brought to heel by the organized 'strike' of the elders: this happened in Kutigi, where, during the great Mohammedan festivals, the elders declined to attend the traditional ceremonial gathering in the chief's house until he gave in rather than prolong this assault on his prestige. That this religious 'strike' concerns a Mohammedan ceremony is incidental. Refusal to co-operate in established ceremonial activities may well check a chief's high-handedness (though I have not seen another case of this kind): the congregation is as indispensable as the 'owner' of a special magic and the chief organizer and 'financier' of communal rites.

Into the problem of political balance enters yet another factor—the economic aspect of chieftainship. The ability of the chief to free himself from all checks on his authority may depend ultimately on the economic resources of which he can avail himself—of the economic resources, that is, allowed him by the village constitution. (We may leave out of account for a moment the existence of the supreme control of village chieftainship by the overlord of the country.) Having to appoint the heads of family groups to the position of village elders, the chief cannot eliminate completely these agents of 'public opinion'. But decisive economic superiority may spell political power uncontrolled—the ability to win over, bribe, or force opponents into submission.

The political power of the chief is sustained by a number of important economic privileges. First, the chief receives (or rather used to receive) a land-tax in kind, known by the Arabic-Hausa name *dzankd*, 'tithe', from every family head. He also receives a certain gift in kind, or sometimes money, when allotting land to new tenants. The nature of this payment as a gift and not as a regular tax is expressed in the rule that on its receipt the chief has to make the usual small return gift with which the Nupe always dismiss a bearer of presents. A special right to fruit-bearing trees assigns to the chief a source of income not available to other members of the community. The communal farm-work, *egbe*, which the Nupe farmers carry out for one another is always performed first, and on the largest scale, on the chief's farms, so that he can count regularly on a larger and more docile team of workers than any other citizen of the village. Finally, the chief has special rights to the fish caught in the ponds or backwaters in his territory, and to certain game killed by the hunters of his village. As regards the former, he again claims *dzankd*, tithe, of every catch; hunters have to surrender to him the skins of leopards or lions, or meat of leopard and lion, or one leg of a buffalo—here the rules vary locally.

Some of these prerogatives have disappeared to-day. The general money tax of the Emirate has replaced the former land fees and tithes. Besides, the chiefs of larger places, official Village Heads under the N.A., receive a fixed salary. Only in a few small villages the annual gift in kind has survived, though reduced in amount and only in the nature of a

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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The struggle for dynastic power is apparent in the economic field.

643 652 661 The control over the wealth and the potential resources of the country, though not exclusively the king's, is yet sufficiently his to render his economic position unassailable. The king of Nupe derived his income firstly from the taxes and tributes which his officers collected, and of which he received the largest share, and secondly, from the wars and raids which the king's armies carried into foreign lands. The king's private estates constituted a third important source of income. These estates were worked by slaves who lived in small hamlets on the royal lands called *esoži*. We shall discuss the organization—past and present—of these royal estates later, in the chapter on land tenure. Here we need only say that not all the Emirs of Nupe were equally keen farmers; some, *Etsu* Mohamadu for example, let things drift; they took little interest in their estates, neglected their *esoži*, and cared only about the regular payments of their share in the yield of the farms.

Other sources of income are less clearly defined—profits made from commerce (above all, from slave-trade), in which an *Etsu* Nupe, like every Nupe nobleman, might sometimes engage; or proceeds from bribes, extortion, and the confiscation of estates belonging to rebels and other 'enemies of the country'. One interesting variety of this latter kind is the exploitation of a religious institution, a 'king's cult' of comparatively recent origin, the anti-witchcraft society which is known in Nupe as the *ndakó gboyá*. The Fulani Emirs had ingeniously grasped the control over this powerful and lucrative secret society and shared the proceeds with its members; the share of *Etsu* Bello in one year is said to have amounted to over £100.[1]

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643 652 655 439 661 Another source of income, which will gain the economist's special appreciation, lay in the royal monopoly of the kola-nut trade. You will find to-day two kinds of kola-nuts on the markets of Nupe (or for that matter Nigeria): the small cheap kind, which is imported from the Gold Coast and Southern Nigeria, and the large, most expensive kola-nut which is grown in Nupe country, on the farms of the kola-nut planters of Laboži. Till the days of British rule this latter kind, famous all over Nigeria, could be procured only by the members of the nobility; no commoner or peasant had any opportunity of obtaining Laboži nuts. The trade in these nuts was a strict monopoly of the *Etsu* Nupe, the kola-nut growers being forbidden to sell their crop to anyone except his own agents.[2] Stories are current of traders smuggling the precious fruits out of Laboži by night, lest they should be seen and caught by the men of the king. In the kola-nut monopoly an instrument of sharp class-prerogative was cleverly combined with an efficient economic measure.[3] But to what extent the *Etsu* Nupe disposed of the kola-nuts as gifts to his courtiers and favourites, and to what extent he made money by selling them to the nobility of the country, I am unable to say.

[1] See p. 142 and *Africa*, 4, 1935.

[782 567] [2] The *Etsu* Nupe in turn supplied the kola-nut planters with slaves to help them in their work. In pre-Fulani days the kings of Nupe are reported also to have presented one slave every year to Laboži to be sacrificed in the annual ritual with which the Laboži planters secured the thriving of their crop.

[3] See p. 129.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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642 But to 'reach' and to 'control' means often wholesale exploitation rather than protection and security. Here the fundamental weakness of
661 a sovereignty in which political control is vested corporately in a ruling group, the members of which are entrusted severally with executive
669 power, is clearly revealed. In other words, in the employment of the political machinery the aspect of duty towards the state is not invariably harmonized with the aspect of class privilege Thus the peace of the country was often disturbed by the rulers themselves: one feudal lord breaking into the territory of another, levying illegal taxes; a royal messenger misappropriating tributes which he was to collect for his royal master; or a royal prince raiding on his own the countries which had paid their tribute and thus bought their claim to the 'king's peace'. King and notables alike would rally against the man who thus betrayed his loyalty to the kingdom. Punitive expeditions, loss of office, and heavy punishment were the reward of those who broke the 'king's peace' and committed what the Nupe call *cin amana* (see p. 110).

642 Revolts were quelled, raids answered with raids, war fought with war, and the 'king's peace' eventually re-established. But under conditions like this, protection and public security could be, at the best, only very unequal and unstable. The stress and tension of the system revealed itself in the various attempts on the part of the peoples of Nupe to secure better safeguards for their civic rights. Direct rebellion was the crudest, and, in fact, least efficient, weapon. Siding with one feudal lord against another, with pretenders against the ruling king, and princes against their royal overlord, meant obtaining, if not permanent security, the promise of protection and favours. Villages and districts could not choose their overlords or feudal delegates: but there are one or two indications that they could change their political status. Thus the villages of Sakpe and Kutigi claim that they obtained under *Etsu* Masaba, in return for heavier taxation, the legal franchise normally granted only to royal domains. I have mentioned the frequent efforts of the Kyedye to secure a semi-autonomous position. The Kusopa of Laboži, taking advantage of their exceptional economic position as the kola-nut planters of the kingdom, were also able to secure from *Etsu* Masaba the status of a royal domain equal to that of Beni and Kyedye.

PATRONAGE AND CLIENTSHIP

641 The privileges granted by one *Etsu* could be abolished by another.
566 Security granted by charter could be infringed by powerful feudal lords.
675 Where the group as such, village, or district, failed to obtain permanent security, individuals could seek protection of a different order: the declaration of voluntary allegiance to a feudal lord or an influential man in the capital bought his and his family's friendship and personal protection. This allegiance, which often went hand in hand with the voluntary adoption of Mohammedanism, would be initiated as a rule by

commands to the inert masses of the population in any other way' (P. Vinogradoff, in *Cambridge Medieval History*, i, p. 653).

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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the present head of the *ndakó gboyá* society, was invested with the pompous title of *Majī Dodo*, Master of the Monster, and with this royal recognition the organization of the society was made subservient to Nupe kingship. One after the other the heads of the society received their titles from the *Etsu* Nupe. Villages and districts which sought the help of the *ndakó gboyá* against witches had to apply first to the king. This new royal prerogative also entailed a considerable economic benefit: for the king shared in the income of the order which was derived from the gifts collected in the villages which had called in the *ndakó gboyá*.[1] But besides tapping a new source of income the co-operation between *Etsu* and anti-witchcraft society meant adding to the centralized temporal jurisdiction the power of spiritual, mystic jurisdiction over the supernatural enemies of society. This powerful prerogative of the king was, in fact, maintained by the Mohammedan Fulani Emirs till very recently.[2]

Every performance of these various rituals and cults in the villages and towns of Nupe—and many are still performed every year, long after the disappearance of the Tsoede dynasty—revived and perpetuated the consciousness of this unity which has grown into far more than an external bond of political unification. With the Islamization of the country many of these factors lost their power. The Fulani rulers could use the secret organization of the *ndakó gboyá*; they could seize by force, as they actually did, the royal insignia from the last Nupe king. They could not transfer the authority of the former 'mythical charter' to their own alien rulership. But they could introduce another, younger, and perhaps more powerful uniting force, Islam—Islam as creed and Islam as education. Mosques, a *Liman* and Mallams in every village, these are the instruments of propaganda.[3] And in every religious service, in every babbling little Mallam school this propaganda is enacted. Teaching Islam means teaching the holy cause which sent the conquerors down to this country. Praying to Allah means praying to the God of the powerful and sharing with them, if not their power, their beliefs. But Mohammedanism even becomes a real means of social approach between rulers and ruled. In a country still to a large extent pagan the adoption of Mohammedanism creates something like an intermediary social stratum, placed nearer to the rulers than the rest of the population. Formerly it involved—at least in theory—certain concrete benefits: an increased measure of security, above all, immunity from slave-raids (as the Koran forbids the enslaving of Mohammedans). This rule, however, was never strictly obeyed—unless the religious qualification was supported by the

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[1] The *ndakó gboyá* society soon became a means of ruthless exploitation. The king and the members of the society were extorting money from the peasants all over the country on the grounds of ridding their villages of witches. This became so intolerable that eventually the Administration of Bida Emirate had to forbid all performances of the *ndako gboyá*. (For a fuller description see *Africa*, 1935, 4.)

[2] It is interesting to note that when the independent Emirate of Patigi was created by the Government this new Nupe ruler appointed a second *Majī Dodo* for his country.

[3] Mokwa, a village of 2,000 inhabitants, possesses eight mosques, one of them built in 1934 during my stay in the village.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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It will have been seen already that the land disputes which we have just described reflect more than merely disputable, equivocal land-contracts. The landlords who 'sell' the land are without exception men of the titled classes, courtiers, favourites, or former slaves of the king or of powerful noblemen, and the 'buyers' mostly commoners, peasants who have had no other chance of obtaining additional land. To-day they are coming to realize that their right to the land which they acquire is protected by the Native Court. But till very recently, in order to obtain their rights, they would have had to bribe their way through or to find a protector equal in rank and influence to the landlord who threatened to evict them—a typical source of the institution of clientship, which we discussed in a previous chapter.[1] A final example. A certain farmer had 'bought' land from D., a *bara* of the late *Etsu* Saidu. The *Etsu*, for reasons of his own, refused his confirmation of the deal—D., being a tenant of the *Etsu*, could not transfer the lease without the latter's permission—and the tenant had only one way open: he attached himself to another, more influential, *bara* of the *Etsu* and through him made various gifts to the *Etsu*, over £3 in money, a valuable civet cat, and promised besides an annual rent of two bundles of corn.

Hereditary Land: Secondary Tenantship

Clientship, combined with a métayer arrangement, becomes a factor in land-tenure also in another respect. A commoner who desired more land, or a new piece of land, could give himself into the service or 'patronage' of a landowning overlord and thus secure land as well as political protection. The conditions were: an initial gift in kind as in all pacts of clientship, occasional presents, visits and other expressions of homage, and finally a tithe (*dzankd* again) from his millet or sorghum crop. This submission to patronage was often the only means by which the peasants in Cis-Kaduna could hope to retain their property when threatened with expropriation, and also the only means by which they could secure new land, that is, access to what under tribal conditions would have been a reserve of village land. The necessity of obtaining land and enjoying its secure possession thus constitutes another of the main roots of clientship. The lease of land obtained by these methods is hereditary, and remains in the family, a comparatively safe possession—unless political factors interfere. The tenants are rarely allowed to forget that the relationship between landlord and client implies more than merely a correct commercial relationship. Lack of respect, an apparent failure to render due homage, or behaviour suggestive of changed

Etsu himself suggested that the disputed piece of land (a river grove that was claimed by two neighbouring villages) should be bought for money by one of the parties. The purchase price fixed was 15*s*.

[1] Till very recently no peasant tenant would have dared to invoke the *Etsu*'s or *Alkali*'s help against his landlord; he would have been looked upon as somebody who had broken away from a firmly established tradition of loyalty, one-sided though it was. The tenant in the last example quoted above kept silent for fifteen years; not till 1934 did he venture to bring his case before the court and thus to obtain a final confirmation of his ownership.

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662 POLITICAL INTRIGUE--use of the techniques of manipulative mobility to wrest favors from the holders of power or to obtain political preferment; flattery and ingratiation; use of bribery; deals; palace intrigue; opportunism; "playing politics", etc. See also:

Manipulative mobility . . . . . 557 Punishment of bribery 687

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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Emirs were, in a loose sense, vassals of a larger state, the Fulani Empire of Gwandu. Beyond an annual tribute by Bida to Gwandu (reduced to-day to a nominal gift) and the merely symbolic confirmation by the Emir of Gwandu of every newly appointed king of Nupe, expressed in the traditional bestowal of a flag, the vassalship involved little interference with the internal government of Nupe. The Emir of Gwandu acted mainly as the guarantor of the various political systems under his suzerainty. In this capacity he was sometimes appealed to in boundary disputes and suchlike, and he would support his arbitration if need be by military action, as happened in the dispute over rights to raid between Bida and Agaie (see p. 115). In turn Bida, like all other Fulani vassal states, could be called upon to send military help to her suzerain. The overlordship of Gwandu was also appealed to in the early dynastic disputes between the descendants of Mallam Dendo. It was due to the advice of Gwandu that Usman Zaki ceded the throne to Masaba; Gwandu helped the Fulani against their rebellious general Umar Bahaushe; and Gwandu supported later the reinstatement of Usman Zaki. The influence of Gwandu upon dynastic affairs disappeared, characteristically, with the gradual establishment of a fixed system of succession which could itself safeguard balance of power and the conciliation of rival claims.

The rival character of the threefold dynastic structure is abundantly manifest in present-day Nupe. Every possession or privilege linked with Nupe kingship reflects the tripartite arrangement. The three highest ranks in the hierarchy of the kingdom are vested in the three royal 'clans': the ruling king, head of one royal house, takes the title *Etsu*; the head of the royal house next in succession, the title *Shaba*, 'Heir Presumptive'; and the head of the third house, the title *Kpotū*. The land of the Beni round Bida where the Fulani settled after their decisive victory, appropriating all vacant land, is divided into three parts: the family of Usman Zaki owns the country east of Bida, the family of Umaru Majigi the country in the south, and the family of Masaba the country in the west.[1] Bida town is divided, as we have seen, into three *ekpā*, each with its royal palace, and each bearing the name of one of the three royal families. Every king adding more land and power to his kingdom is adding at the same time more land and power to his own family, and distributes land and wealth among his own followers and favourites. Every *Etsu* Nupe uses the period of his reign to increase to the utmost the wealth and power of his house. The only balance of power lies in the rigid system of succession. For favouritism and extortions from the ruling *Etsu* may win for the house of his successor the favour of the masses; oppression from one may mean help from the other; the increase of power in one royal house will eventually be balanced by the growth of the house that succeeds it to the throne. It is a precarious balance, and its history, which is the history of Bida to-day, is written in rivalries, feuds, intrigues, and revolts, which threaten constantly the peace of the country and tear the people of Bida into rival factions.

The struggle for dynastic power is as apparent in the economic field.

[1] See sketch map, p. 81.

1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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CHAPTER VIII

POLITICAL HISTORY OF NUPE KINGDOM

(*continued*)

THE FEUDAL STATE

WE have seen how in the history of the kingdom a certain territorial nucleus evolved, an area of 'Nupe proper'. This concept of a territorial 'nucleus' also forms the basis of the division of the country for the purpose of government. For the purposes of political, judicial, and tax administration the kingdom was divided into four zones. First, the area of the conquered tributary countries outside the boundaries of the 'kingdom proper', in Nupe terminology, the countries of the *zaži kati*, the 'Outside Peoples'. Second, within these boundaries, an innermost core, the countries of Beni and Kyedye; having formed the nucleus of the rising kingdom they are now assigned the privileged position of royal domains. The third zone comprised the wider 'ring' of remaining towns and districts of the kingdom, most of which lie in Trans-Kaduna. Bida town, the seat of the central government, formed an administrative district of its own.

Under the name of Outside Peoples were comprised the conquered territories of Gbari, Gbira, Kamberi, Kakanda, Yagba, Bunu, and certain sections of Nupe (Dibo and Ebe mostly). These districts were not administered fully by the central government. Their political dependence entailed two things: an annual tribute to Bida, and the recognition by other Emirates and chieftainships of the political status of these territories as 'under the protection' of Bida. It was a one-sided 'protection': Bida itself was free to raid her own outside peoples, but no other country could do this or levy taxes in these territories with impunity. The guarantor of these 'treaties' was, in the last instance, the Emir of Gwandu, the highest feudal overlord of all Fulani Emirs in this part of the world.[1] The central government in Bida did not assume jurisdiction over these countries, nor did it interfere in their own political administration. The tribute was paid in slaves and was collected annually by royal messengers, *tuci*, or as they were also called *ajele* (from the Arabic *ajala*, to dispatch), who visited these countries at the head of small armies, ready to quell any disturbance or to bring recalcitrant taxpayers to heel. Of the tribute levied a little more than half went to the king, the rest to the royal messenger. The office of tax-collector in the outside areas of the kingdom was entrusted mostly to the royal nobility, and the districts over which they were put in charge were linked with

[1] Such an 'international' agreement existed, for example, between the *Etsu* Nupe, the *Sarkin Sudan* (the Emir of Kontagora), and the Emir of Zaria with respect to Gbari country. These treaties were not always kept by the parties concerned. Thus the *Etsu* of Agaie used to raid the territories of his brother Emir, the *Etsu* Nupe, and had eventually to be stopped by a big war which was led by the Emir of Gwandu himself.

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1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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636 651 662 certain ranks. Thus *Edukpā*, the Countries beyond the Niger, were always the province of the *Nágya*, the country of the Kamberi of the *Kusódu*, of the Gbari of the *Etsu Gbari*, of the Yagba of the *Makū*, and so on. Political influence, however, could alter the rule, and a rich district would sometimes go to the more powerful royal prince irrespective of his rank. Thus *Etsu* Maliki, to win over the powerful *Kpotū* Ábubakari (who became *Etsu* after Maliki's death) transferred the rich fief of *Edukpā* from the *Nágya* to him. Power and the possession of a strong private army was essential for the post of an *ajele*. An *ajele* who failed in his task was dismissed from rank and office and replaced by a 'stronger' man.

635 651 It is no accident that the two royal domains of Nupe kingdom were the two political organizations which embraced the whole tribe, the two small 'states within the State', Beni and Kyedye. The political unification which they had evolved was recognized and utilized by the political administration of the kingdom. These areas were placed directly under the king. The chiefs of Beni and Kyedye acted somewhat as royal agents. Their appointment and succession was subject to the confirmation of the king, and a gift of sandals, a gown, and a turban which he presented to the new *Žitsu* symbolized, as we have seen, the fact that the local chief held his office 'by the grace of the king'. The town-kings of Beni and the *Kuta* of the Kyedye administered law in all cases which came under the category of *gyara*, 'reparation', and were required to refer graver cases, cases involving *sheri'a*, 'judgement', to the central authority—a point to which we shall return later. The town-kings also collected the tax in their areas on behalf of the king. This tax, *edu*, levied in these areas as in the whole kingdom, was in money, thus differing from the *dzankā*, the local tithe in kind. The tax was collected first by the head chief of the district, i.e. the *Kuta* among the Kyedye, and the town-king of Tafiē and (in Fulani times) Bida among the Beni, who placed the money into the hands of the royal tax-collectors appointed for these two royal domains. Of the tax levied in the domains the *Etsu* received two-thirds, the royal tax-collectors and the head chiefs of the two districts sharing between them the remaining third. In the time of *Etsu* Masaba, however, the *Etsu* took all and the town-king of Bida, in order to obtain his share, levied an additional tax of his own. The total tax paid by a Beni village in Fulani times is said to have amounted to £2 under *Etsu* Masaba and £3 under Umaru Majigi; later, under the greedy Maliki, it rose higher and higher till *u de iyaka à*, 'there was no limit'.[1]

000 The rest of Nupe kingdom was divided up into smaller and larger

[1] The Bororó Fulani who came regularly to Nupe with their cattle formed another such royal domain with respect to taxation. The organization of this nomadic group evidently lent itself to no other method of administration. Their tax was collected by their own group head, the *Diko*, and then handed over to the royal tax-collector, who was known as *egba Bororó* (Delegate to the Bororó). He was himself a Fulani, who lived—and is still living—in Bida. When the *Etsu* Nupe recently wanted to buy cattle for his new experimental farms he arranged the deal through the man who used to be *egba Bororó*, making use of the old connexion for the new purpose.

3: Forde E-4 (no date) 1955 FF52 Nupe FF52

565 the highest *gitsú* ranks go with the title. First appointment to a title and promotion to a higher one are granted by the king in council with the royal princes and other officers of state. Any able-bodied man of senior age, proved loyalty, and ability, and good health, of the Fulani families, is eligible for admission to a *gitsúši* title, but favouritism, intrigue, and bribery also play a part, and the titles which a family has been able to accumulate are an indication of its influence at court and its favour with the ruling king. When a title-holder becomes incapable, through age or illness, of fulfilling his duties, a younger man is appointed, the former holder being styled " old *Kpotuŋ* " or whatever the title may be. Nobody with any kind of deformity can hold a title, since the system was originally based on service in war and offices vital to the safety of the state. Investiture takes place in the *Etsu*'s house, in the presence of the *Alkali* or *Liman*, a propitious day having first been selected by mallams or diviners. The candidate is addressed by the *Etsu*, then clothed in a cloak and embroidered gown by the *Alkali* who also places a turban on his head. After prayers in which all join, the new holder rides through the town accompanied by other title-holders, and dismounts to greet princes or heads of houses at their residences.

The second class is that to which the *ticiši* or *rowni* (office-holding nobility) belong. The name *rowni* means " turbans " and refers to the fact that the bestowal of such a title is symbolized by the gift of a turban from the king. There are three groups of *ticiši*, each of which is regarded as a sharply defined social order: the *sarakiši*, the *ena manši*, and the *ena wuši*. The *sarakiši* is a group of civil and military nobility consisting of town elders (*ena ndeji*) and war leaders (*ena 'kuŋ*). The second order, *ena manši*, comprises the mallams, the religious and judicial officials, such as the *Alkali* (judge), and the *Liman* (religious head), with their assistants and scribes. The third order, *ena wuši*, which is the lowest in rank but still possesses great influence, consists of the court slaves.

Many of the *saraki* titles are identical in name with those bestowed on the village elders, but the symbols of status, even when similar, refer to very different social contexts. *Saraki* titles are, like *gitsú* titles, generally granted by the *Etsu* in council with princes and other officers of state. Theoretically, at least, outsiders, even commoners, who have won his favour may be admitted to the ranks. Only a few of the higher titles, which have become the prerogatives of certain families, are hereditary. Several titles cannot be accumulated in a single family. They are bestowed exclusively on one member of the family group; no other close relative can then claim a title or office in addition to the one already bestowed on his " house." To-day wealth and financial influence are important factors in gaining titles and the *saraki* group includes rich traders, as well as descendants of the old official nobility of pre-Fulani Nupe, and Nupe families who became partisans of the Fulani conquerors. These *sarakiši* received no salary, but were formerly granted land and slaves.

The *Ndeji* (" father of the town "), the head of the *ena ndeji*, is in charge of the affairs of Bida and the most powerful of the officers of state because he is closest to the king. At the head of the other civil title-holders he holds the daily council (*nkó*) with the king himself. The military titles (*ena 'kuŋ*) were formerly those of war leaders, the different titles being associated with special responsibilities.

565 517 554 The *ena manši*, the order of mallams, is " a class between classes, a mobile privileged intelligentsia." It includes the *Alkali*, the *Liman*, and their assistants. The detailed knowledge of Moslem law and literature and the specialized training required limits the number of candidates. But the offices of *Liman* and *Alkali* are sometimes hereditary, reflecting a tradition of learning in certain families, and political influence, for many eminent mallams are of Fulani stock. Mallams are highly esteemed by everyone and are placed about commoners even when they are without rank or title and have only little learning. They are allowed to marry daughters and sisters of higher born families.